

Holiday Celebrations Guidelines E-mail

Sent from the U of M Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action on 12/6/11

Dear all,

We understand that the holiday season is an exciting time to celebrate and foster community. With that in mind, we send the following recommendations to encourage office holiday related activities that are respectful of religious diversity:

- ☐ Instead of “holiday” parties use a winter celebration or a year-end celebration theme.
- ☐ Do not use invitations that reflect any particular religion – keep it neutral and related to winter (I.e. Snow, snowflakes, winter activities like skating).
- ☐ Decorations, music, and food should be general, and not specific to any religion. Remember to also be mindful and respectful of any dietary restrictions and provide options.
- ☐ Individuals may display expressions of their religious faith in their own personal space, but not in public areas and within reason.
- ☐ Re-evaluate long standing practices, such as “Secret Santa,” partnerships with outside organizations/charities, and ask how inclusive these really are.
- ☐ Encourage individuals to express their concerns/objections and provide information for anonymous reporting options.
- ☐ Be mindful that there are holidays and special dates throughout the year. Be respectful of these dates and plan meetings and events around them.
- ☐ Be consistent. Try to be flexible with the needs and scheduling of individuals for holidays throughout the year.
- ☐ If you do not know if you need to approach someone in your department about the expression of their faith or you are concerned that there are in- appropriate religious celebrations in your work or learning environment please contact EOAA at [612-624-9547](tel:612-624-9547).

Thank you very much and enjoy the beginning of winter!

Kimberly Hewitt, Director
Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action